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2003 FEB -6 A 9:08

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February 4, 2003

Rear Admiral Paul J. Pluta
United States Coast Guard
2100 Second Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20593

RE: Docket No. USCG-2002-11288 -29

Dear Admiral Pluta:

I am in receipt of the January 23, 2003, proposed rule governing pilotage fees on the Great Lakes and have just learned that the USCG may implement the rate increase by February 14, 2003 before the end of the comment period.

I am opposed to such an interim ruling. I had begun discussions with industry representative at the Port facility I operate and have found only a few of the businesses even aware of the proposed increase in pilotage fees. Many are reluctant to comment this quickly with out all the facts and justifiably so, but to consider implementation without due process is an injustice because the impact is significant to all regional businesses that are struggling in this economic climate, many already in bankruptcy. Further, to imply that a readjustment can be done at a later date is a plausible statement, but reality is it would be a significant stretch with the future transition of your agency to the Department of Homeland Security and the fourth coming implementation and enforcement of the Marine Transportation Security Act of 2002.

The diverse economic impact of such a premature decision is exponential respective of the number of pilots to be affected at prevailing wage rates. I sincerely hope you reevaluate your position and allow sufficient time to due process amongst the impacted parties to comment as originally proposed.

Sincerely,

PORT OF INDIANA
BURNS HARBOR/PORTAGE
Stephen H. Mosher
Port Director - Burns Harbor